DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 295 852 SO 018 665

AUTHOR Wright, H. Curtis
TITLE The Central Problem of Intellectual History.
PUB DATE 2 Oct 87
NOTE 15p.; Paper presented at the Annual Conference of the Society of Educators and Scholars (12th, Charleston, IL, October 2, 1987).
PUB TYPE Speeches/Conference Papers (150) -- Viewpoints (120)

EDRS PRICE MF01/PC01 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS Christianity; Cultural Background; Greek Civilization; *Intellectual History; *Naturalism; Philosophy; Religion; *Western Civilization

ABSTRACT

Western civilization constitutes a perennial conflict of spiritualities derived from comprehensive world views that are contradictory and irreconcilable. These world views are the vertical view of Judeo-Christian supernaturalism, and the horizontal view of Greco-Roman naturalism. The Judeo-Christian view holds that reality includes and transcends the natural order, while the Greco-Roman naturalism holds that all reality is included within the natural order. James Thrower states that the argument is between a religious and non-religious response to reality. Greek culture moved from religion through mythology to philosophy where it split into (1) matter philosophy or materialism, the basis of the natural and physical sciences; and (2) form philosophy or idealism, which evolved from materialism and later created humanistic scholarship. The axiomatic assumptions underlying naturalism have not been challenged while those axioms underlying supernaturalism have been challenged. Christian scholars must be thoroughly familiar with the Greco-Roman tradition in order to examine its underlying axioms. There has not been a single comprehensive history of the horizontal tradition, although Franklin L. Baumer has recently launched an effort to trace the modern development of the horizontal tradition. The religious dilemma of modern man cannot be solved by utilitarian arguments. (SM)

****
* Reproductions supplied by EDRS are the best that can be made *
* from the original document. *
****

ED295852

THE CENTRAL PROBLEM OF INTELLECTUAL HISTORY

by

H. Curtis Wright

"PERMISSION TO REPRODUCE THIS MATERIAL HAS BEEN GRANTED BY

H. CURTIS WRIGHT

TO THE EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)."

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
Office of Educational Research and Improvement
EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)

✓ This document has been reproduced as received from the person or organization originating it.

☐ Minor changes have been made to improve reproduction quality.

• Points of view or opinions stated in this document do not necessarily represent official OERI position or policy.

30 018 665

THE CENTRAL PROBLEM OF INTELLECTUAL HISTORY

By H. Curtis Wright

"It is generally a good principle in intellectual history ... to keep in mind a writer's opponents."
--Paul Roazen[1]

Western civilization, which includes all of the major cultures in both Americas and Canada, constitutes a perennial conflict of spiritualities derived from comprehensive world views that are truly contradictory and permanently irreconcilable. These world views are the vertical view of Judeo-Christian supernaturalism, a dualistic metaphysics which holds that reality not only includes but transcends the natural order, and the horizontal view of Greco-Roman naturalism, a monistic metaphysics which holds that all reality is included within the natural order. Such radically different perspectives on reality cannot be held at the same time by a rational human being. It is possible, of course, to vascillate between them; but it remains forever impossible to believe simultaneously that the natural order is all there is, and that there is something other than the natural order.

These conflicting world views, however, are not the simple opposites of one another. The Judeo-Christian view is perforce inclusionary, for example, because no one can believe that a supernatural order transcends the natural order without also believing in a natural order. But the Greco-Roman view is intentionally exclusionary because intellectuals in the 7th century B.C., who reacted negatively to the presence of Oriental mystery religions in Greece, labored without ceasing to deliberately and systematically exclude all forms of Near Eastern supernaturalism from their cultural traditions. They were not completely successful in the short run; but how well they have succeeded in the long run may be inferred from a recent study of Occidental irreligion entitled The Alternative Tradition. The title is purposely suggestive, for naturalism is a reactive tradition which must be studied in relation to the tradition it reacts against. Thus, the instances of naturalism, such as agnosticism and unbelief, "can be understood only against the background of

---

[1]Cited in The Secular Mind: Transformations of Faith in Modern Europe, ed. W. Warren Wagar (New York: Holmes & Meier, 1982), 127.

the religious belief ... [they were] concerned to question or deny."[2] But the influence of the religious and sceptical traditions on each other, to cite another example, has never been identical. The overall tendency of their interaction is always one-sided--toward the naturalizing of religion, not toward the supernaturalizing of science or scholarship--since naturalism is committed to the extermination of supernaturalism (something it can never hope to accomplish) and reacts only negatively to religious criticism. The supernaturalists, however, have always seen great value in naturalism: the monastic preservation of the classical heritage through the perils of the early middle ages demonstrates that, for the story of Western civilization would have been very different if the great sceptics of the alternative tradition had been given an opportunity to let Christianity sink into oblivion.

> Much of the ongoing development of religion has been in response to the critique which naturalism has brought against it. Rarely, however, has the reverse been the case. Naturalism has developed almost entirely by its own momentum, conditioned only by ... the external world; for naturalism holds the meaning of the world to lie--in all spheres--within itself. It makes no reference to those "powers" ... beyond space and time ... which ... [religions] hold to be operative in history determining the destiny of men. The whole meaning of man's life is, for naturalism, to be found ... within this world. Herein lies the crux of the ongoing argument between a religious and a non-religious response to ... [reality].[3]

In his study of the "alternative tradition," therefore, Thrower concentrates on "the growth of a ... naturalistic view of the world,"[4] which has important implications for all aspects of Western thought. In order to do that, however, he must also study "the outlook on the world which naturalism seeks to supplant,"[5] for doing otherwise would render naturalism unintelligible. "The great divide between a religious and a non-religious interpretation of life," he says, "has [always] been between those who saw the world as created and directed by a transcendent God and those who did not or ... were agnostic

---

[2]James Thrower, The Alternative Tradition: Religion and the Rejection of Religion in the Ancient World (The Hague: Mouton, 1980), 36.

[3]Ibid., 9. Italics mine.

[4]Ibid., 15.

[5]Ibid.

on the issue."[6] Thus, the religious people of all ages, who have often been called "primitives" by scholars like Thrower, are not perforce unintelligent. They may be well educated and brilliant, as a matter of fact, in any number of things: but they inevitably display a questionable attitude toward "the relationship between sacred and profane, the natural and the supernatural, mind and matter, cause and effect,"[7] and so forth, that is invariably described as mythological; and "the premises upon which they base their whole response to the world are different from the premises upon which ... [most] of us base our understanding of the world today."[8] Straddling the great divide in order to counterpose these two traditions for the critical study of scepticism or religion is therefore no easy task, as "the growth of this juxtaposition is long and complex,"[9] and the spirit of supernatural religion is as old as the human race itself.

> But the spirit [of naturalism] which animates our concerns is not new [either], for it ... can be found from the time of man's earliest recorded speculations; ... always it has been there, in all cultures and at all times--for it is one polarity of the questing human spirit.[10]

Thrower's purpose, accordingly, is to delineate the beginnings and subsequent growth of the natural tradition throughout antiquity "in contradistinction to the ... religious tradition."[11] That is an ambitious undertaking which is therefore only partially realized, as may be expected, in this important pioneering effort.

Greek culture moves from religion through mythology to philosophy, where it splits into matter philosophy, or materialism, which creates the natural

---

[6]Ibid., 35, adding that among the Hindus "the great monistic tradition of the advaita (or non-dualistic) Vedanta," as well as "Jainism and Buddhism, which broke ... from Hinduism in the sixth century BC," each "denied the existence of a transcendent God.

[7]Ibid., 21, citing E. O. James, Myth and Ritual in the Ancient Near East (London: Thames & Hudson, 1958), 281.

[8]Thrower, The Alternative Tradition, 21.

[9]Ibid., 9.

[10]Ibid., 8.

[11]Ibid.

and physical sciences, and form philosophy, or idealism, which creates humanistic scholarship.[12] It was the "new" world view of the Ionian materialists that triggered the shift from mythology to philosophy--a shift that radically altered Western thought by interrupting its fascination with the "old" world view of Oriental supernaturalism and fixing its attention squarely upon the natural order. Philosophy was therefore born when the old mythological beliefs (which personified the forces of nature as suprahuman agents) were overthrown by a new metaphysical conviction "that the apparent chaos of events" conceals an "underlying order" of its own, "and that this order is the product of impersonal forces."[13]

> The 'new understanding of the world' consisted in the substitution of natural for mythological causes, ... of internal development for external compulsion.... [And 'nature' is thenceforth seen as] something essentially internal and intrinsic to the world, the [operating] principle of its growth and present organization, [which is] identified at this early stage with its material constituent.[14]

That consigns all conceivable causes and their effects throughout the whole of reality to the natural order itself; and beyond the natural order, if this new conviction is taken seriously, there is absolutely nothing that exists or is real. Thus, the seedlings of empiricism, with its dogged refusal to tolerate transcendent propositions of any kind, were sown in the 6th century B.C., for without "systematic enquiry into the workings of the [physical] world," coupled with "a [conceptual] grasp of the fundamental unity of natural processes" and "their independence of supernatural interference," the rise of modern science would have been impossible.[15] This whole scenario, moreover, was re-enacted on a grand scale in early modern times, when "the

---

[12]I have discussed the philosophical aspect of this development in "The Symbol and its Referent," Library Trends, vol. 34, no. 4 (Spring, 1986), 730-37.

[13]W. K. C. Guthrie, A History of Greek Philosophy (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1962-1968), I, 26.

[14]Ibid., I, 83, adding that "the primary assumption is not simply that it consists of a single material substance, but that the diversity of its present order is not from eternity, but has evolved from something radically simpler ... in time."

[15]Thrower, The Alternative Tradition, 114.

'new' philosophy of nature ... was to undermine the ... Christian mythico-religious understanding of the world on just such an account;"[16] and it is therefore "the gradual recovery of this outlook ... that brings to fruition the ... naturalism of our own time."[17]

> The ... naturalistic understanding of events in the world and of the world-process itself ... will be revived and developed in Western Europe from the sixteenth century onwards.... The issues which it raises for religion are ... very much alive today. Much contemporary religious language is still mythological ... in that events ..., both past and present, are interpreted in terms of a mixed, natural/supernatural language. The question is still ... whether events in the world are to be understood as resulting from natural causes ... or whether we can discern in events, and in the world process, divine activity and purpose.[18]

The Judeo-Christian tradition, says Thrower, "has answered this question in the affirmative," since it has always claimed that "there is ... divine purpose and providence in the world," and that at least "some events are the outcome of direct divine intervention."[19] But Thrower is not convinced, because "the whole ... development of our understanding of both the world and of history has, ... since the sixteenth century, been away from this response to the world."[20] The case is overstated, of course. But the twentieth-century breakdown of religion, which is "well-nigh complete" according to Thrower,[21] has indeed led to the widespread conviction that we "live today in a post-religious age, and are ... the first persons in ... history ... to do so."[22] The modern horizontalists, certainly, have been relentless in their criticism of the vertical tradition. They have launched a devastating attack on Christianity and on "the ... mythico-religious response to which it is

---

[16]Ibid., 19.

[17]Ibid., 114.

[18]Ibid., 229, adding that "the origins of the alternative ... approach lie ... in the Classical period of European thought."

[19]Ibid.

[20]Ibid.

[21]Ibid., 137.

[22]Ibid., 8.

allied, ... which sees the world as admixed with ... supernatural forces."[23] Their frontal assaults on revealed religion, "combined with positive speculation into the origin of the world and into natural processes," have produced "the first glimmerings of the alternative tradition" in modern times, "which ... finally reaches fruition in our own day"[24]--and does so "only within Western culture."[25] This has profoundly affected all aspects of Occidental life, as stated by Karl Marx.

> Criticism has plucked the imaginary flowers [of Christianity] from the chain [of the supernatural tradition] so that man ... will shake off the chain and cull the living flower [of naturalism]. The criticism of religion disillusions man to make him think and act and shape his reality like a [disillusioned] man who has ... come to ... [his senses], so that he will revolve round himself and therefore round his true sun.... The task of history, ... once the world beyond the truth has disappeared, is to establish the truth of this world. The immediate task of philosophy, which is at the service of history once the saintly form of human self-alienation has been unmasked, is to unmask self-alienation in its unholy forms. Thus the critique of heaven turns into the critique of earth.[26]

The process of horizontalizing the vertical tradition, "needless to say, is not, as yet, complete."[27] It is clear, however, that the naturalists can never rest until it is completed; and that poses a fundamental problem for intellectual history. Thrower focuses this problem by making the seemingly

---

[23]Ibid., 253.

[24]Ibid.

[25]Ibid., 137, adding that "the naturalistic approach comes to systematic fruition" in Western thought, where it actually "supercedes the ... religious outlook on life."

[26]Ibid., 254, adding that "the prelude to this passionate concern with life in this world ... is the growth of that alternative tradition ... which, from about ... the eighteenth century ..., began to oust the mythico-religious understanding of reality." Italics mine. See also ibid., 31-32, where Thrower argues that the vertical tradition manifests "a tendency to bestow ultimate and ... definitive ontological status on existing social and moral structures," that "thinking about the transformation of society" before the 19th century "was invariably millenarian," and that "it was only with the advent of Marxism ... [that] a revolutionary, humanistic transformation of society, in accordance with a naturalistic understanding of man and of society, became a serious possibility."

[27]Ibid.

arrogant claim that his account of metaphysical naturalism constitutes "the first ... attempt [ever] made to survey this field."[28] That claim, surely, is not sensu stricto true. Or is it? My own attempts to locate accounts like Thrower's had been systematically frustrated for at least thirty years before I stumbled onto an important Festschrift edited by Warren Wagar, which identified an intellectual historian, Franklin L. Baumer of Yale University, as a scholar who had devoted his entire academic career to this very problem.[29] Baumer's major work,[30] however, covers only the modern period, while Thrower is essentially concerned with antiquity. So, Baumer and Thrower compliment each other, although I have not yet happened upon a like-minded scholar for the Middle Ages (ca. 500-1500 C.E.). All of which underscores the problem posed above: whereas everyone seems to realize that "the axial themes of religious and antireligious thought relate somehow to fundamental human needs,"[31] it is downright difficult to study either of those themes as a whole, to say nothing of studying their complex interactions. Baumer, writing in the late fifties, found a formidable dearth of information on this problem which has persisted into the eighties. The horizontal scholars, it seems, whose idea of "objectivity" is to criticize everybody else's assumptions, have produced the critical histories of everything in sight--including Christianity--with at least one important exception: they have not produced a single comprehensive history, critical or otherwise, of their own tradition. I was stunned to learn this from Baumer, for it means that scholarly naturalists, whatever their disciplines, have been free to criticize the assumptions of the Judeo-Christian tradition, whereas the assumptions of the Greco-Roman tradition have never been seriously challenged in modern times. A large part of the reason for this, it seems to me, is that the ruling ideas of the scientific revolt against

---

[28]Ibid., 10.

[29]The Secular Mind, a series of "Essays presented to Franklin L. Baumer, Randolph W. Townsend Professor of History, Yale University," whose Foreword and Introduction contain information about Baumer by Wagar and by Jaroslav Pelikan.

[30]Religion and the Rise of Scepticism (New York: Harcourt, Brace, 1960).

[31]The Secular Mind, 1.

metaphysical dualism have favored the world view of the Greco-Roman tradition, which rejects the supernatural realities of Judeo-Christian revelation. To cite just one example from Western thought: the burden of proving the existence of God has always fallen on the believer, and the unbeliever has never been confronted with the necessity of proving the nonexistence of God. This is unmistakably a lopsided situation. It obtains because all of the arguments both for and against the existence or nonexistence of transcendent realities are derived from the axiomatic assumptions which underlie the ancient quarrel of naturalism (the natural order is all there is) with supernaturalism (there is something other than the natural order). Axioms, remember, are not things we think about: they are assumptions we think with, the deep gut-reactions to the inscrutable mystery of our own existence which constitute the metaphysical starting points that determine how we think about everything. They can neither be proven nor disproven, to be sure, because they lurk somewhere in the darkest shadows of the human mind, where they govern all of its brilliant demonstrations of rational logic and systematic evaluations of empirical evidence; and if the ground assumptions and root metaphors of the horizontal tradition are hidden from view today, it is not because they constitute the only fountainheads of truth or falsity: it is because the "nimbly shifting Zeitgeist," as someone has called the prevailing spirit of the times, has protected them from scrutiny while exposing the foundations of the vertical tradition to critical examination.

> [The sceptical tradition] is clearly one of the most important traditions in modern European history--and one of the most neglected. Other traditions, such as the classical tradition, the humanistic tradition, the romantic tradition, the scientific tradition, the conservative, liberal, democratic, and socialist traditions, have found their historians. To my knowledge, however, no one has properly identified and charted the course of the sceptical tradition down to the present.[32]

---

[32]Baumer, Religion and the Rise of Scepticism, 21, adding that "there are ... many monographs on particular phases of the subject. John M. Robertson's A Short History of Freethought Ancient and Modern (first edition 1899; second edition, rewritten and enlarged [in 2 vols.], 1906) was a pioneer work of a more general sort and included a review of previous general studies.... Despite his claim to objectivity, Robertson wrote from the nineteenth-century rationalist point of view.... He went back to the ancient

There is a crucially important risk which inheres in ignoring such a glaring omission as that, for "the contemporary religious problem is simply unintelligible," and may indeed be unsolvable, "without full awareness of it."[33] The sceptics, however, are not wholly to blame for this, as Christian believers, who have been put on the defensive by the rise of scepticism, have not done their homework either: they should be thoroughly familiar, even fascinated, with the sceptical tradition, more interested in their opponents, perhaps, than in anything except revealed religion itself. This has always been one of the greatest weaknesses of believing Christians: they simply do not know the history of the Western intellect, with all of its perversions and weaknesses; and they are therefore constantly wandering unawares into its blind alleys and dead ends, marvelling that strange things are happening to them, wondering how in the world they got into the messes they are in, and speechless as to why things should be this way. Baumer therefore launches a determined effort to begin closing this "gap," as he calls it, by tracing the modern development of the horizontal tradition in order "to show how and by whom it was generated, and how it grew and gained momentum up to and including the present 'crisis' which Jung, Tillich, Joad, and others so vividly describe."[34] That is a tall order; but the result is illuminating, for it clearly shows, without whitewashing the excesses of the religious camp in any way, how desperately the naturalist needs the supernaturalist as a kind of "straight man" or "whipping boy" to play against. Unlike Thrower, however, whose naturalistic bias is blatantly transparent, Baumer withdraws from both traditions in order to study their mutual interactions without being committed to either one of them; and he really belongs to both of them,

---

and even primitive world whereas I ... commence at about the seventeenth century, ... with a few glances farther back. Also, ... his study came down only to the end of the nineteenth century, whereas a third or more of my study deals with the twentieth century.... His study ... is less analytical than mine," etc. Robertson also expanded his coverage of the 19th century in another large volume entitled A History of Freethought in the Nineteenth Century (New York: Putnam, 1930). Thus, there is a lot of "grist" for constructing the intellectual history of the sceptical tradition, but so far it has generated no critical histories of the tradition as a whole.

[33]Ibid., 22.

[34]Ibid.

I think, as he struggles to understand the "why" and the "how" of this belonging. Barbara Ward has warned, he reminds us, that "faith will not be restored in the West because people believe it to be useful. It will return only when they find that it is true."[35] And Baumer follows that warning with a searching question of his own: "In view of the rise of scepticism during the last four hundred years," he asks, is "modern man" really no longer capable of accepting even the slightest possibility that there might be some truth, however meager, in religion?[36]

> This, it seems to me, is the real nub of the problem.... 'Modern man' ... is the heir of a great [Graeco-Roman] tradition, let us call it the sceptical tradition, which at crucial points challenges another great tradition, the religious Judaeo-Christian tradition, of the West. In the present epoch a large and increasing number of Europeans have expressed a desire to return ... to 'the sheltering womb' of the religious tradition, or at least to something approximating it--partly for reasons of psychic health, partly because they suspect that it may be essential to 'civilization' to do so. Unfortunately ..., however, this new 'will to believe' ... conflicts with their [modern] world view. Whenever they take it into their heads to 'return,' the shades of all the great sceptics, Pierre Bayle and Voltaire, Ernest Renan and Sigmund Freud and the rest, rise up around them and persuade them, with considerable success, that they cannot go back. This is the religious dilemma of 'modern man,' and it cannot be solved, as Miss ward rightly observes, ... by utilitarian arguments.[37]

Baumer is onto something here, for the conflict of disparate spiritualities caused by the infiltration of each by the other is both intricate and paradoxical, raising the eyebrows of naturalists and supernaturalists alike. But the either-or disjunction is definitely out, I think, because no one can live either with nothing but religion or completely without religion. The naturalists have tried the latter, only to create "what Baumer calls the 'humanistic faith' of the Enlightenment and its heirs, the 'ersatz-religions' of the nineteenth century" (with their deification of such "gods" as Mankind,

---

[35]Ibid., 19.

[36]Ibid.

[37]Ibid., 19-20, citing Miss Ward's Faith and Freedom (New York: Norton, 1954), 265. Italics Baumer's.

Society, Nature, History, and Culture),[38] which subsequently failed miserably to perform the functions of religion; and the supernaturalists have proven the former proposition by demonstrating the folly of regarding our involvement with the two traditions as "the melodrama of a war to the death between implacable foes."[39] Western cultural history, as a matter of fact, is fairly permeated with paradoxes of this kind. Yesterday, for example, the Reformers, driven by an immense desire to bring religion down to earth, "sacrificed otherworldliness for a holy secularity"[40] which, by its essential worldliness, transformed their followers into apostles of self-aggrandizement and commercial opportunism. Because "good works" were the only means of manifesting their faith to the world, that is to say, they learned to produce as much as possible, because industry was a virtue and indolence was sinful, to consume as little as possible, since waste was a vice and gluttony was one of the seven deadly sins, and (3) to lay up the difference, for obscure reasons having something to do with "righteousness." Thus, the ambitious overachievers of Christianity, by virtue of their thrift and industry, have created the very capital which has drastically altered the social and economic institutions of the West and driven almost everybody into the modern secular city--the most worldly place on the face of this planet--where we interpret the accumulation of capital as a symptom of "spirituality," and where "most of the best minds in Christendom have learned to manage quite well without the Christian faith."[41] That faith, remember, has always suffered more in urban centers than in rural settings, for the city dweller "is everywhere the most secularized citizen of a modern state; and the least secularized are the people who remain tied to the land ... in areas least

---

[38]The Secular Mind, 4.

[39]Ibid., 9.

[40]Ibid., 2. This follows "Berger's argument that the Protestant rebellion helped to discredit ... traditional Christian otherworldliness, and helped to encourage vigorous involvement in secular vocations," ibid., 9. See Peter Berger, The Sacred Canopy: Elements of a Sociological Theory of Religion (Garden City, N.Y.: Doubleday, 1967), passim.

[41]The Secular Mind, 9.

affected by modernizing forces in agriculture."[42] As for the rest of us, however, "we are citizens of the secular city. No yearning for past simplicities, which are mostly imaginary [anyway] ..., can call more than a few of us back to the sacred village of our fathers.... We can be bombed out of our city, and perhaps we shall be."[43] We can build bigger and better cities; and we may have to do that, too. But today, for better or for worse, we belong to the city, because "the city is our home."[44] And the city belongs to the sceptical tradition, whose advocates include the "twentieth-century sociologists and anthropologists of religion" who say that "man can live without this or that particular ... religious belief and practice, ... but not without religion of any kind."[45]

That should suffice, I think, to show that the paradoxical relations between these two traditions are neither simple nor simplistic. How could it be otherwise when, for example, "the absence of God in a Kafka novel or a Beckett play is ... so conspicuous and overwhelming ... that it can do more to awaken religious consciousness than whole libraries of theology?"[46] But is it the flag or the cross, the flag and the cross, the flag over the cross, or the flag under the cross? I personally opt for the latter; but I agree wholeheartedly with Wagar's argument that "religious faith has both influenced, and been influenced by, the growth of secular belief-systems and institutions"[47]--and vice versa.

---

[42]Ibid., 7. This has also been true throughout antiquity, where the landed aristocracies, who are fiercely protective of their holdings in the plains and valleys, are always squabbling with the freewheeling enterprises of the monied aristocrats in the coastal areas, etc.

[43]Ibid., 9-10.

[44]Ibid., 10.

[45]Ibid., 4.

[46]Ibid., 9.

[47]Ibid., 5.

> The interaction in modern Western history between religion (however defined) and secularity (however defined) cannot be reduced to a struggle between sharply opposed and clearly distinguishable forces. The degree of interpenetration is astonishing, and in the process, both 'sides' have undergone astonishing transformations.[48]

Well, I have certainly been astonished by it; and as an amateur with no credentials in intellectual history, I can only say to the intellectual historians that I am deeply interested in their central issue because it hits me right where I live, right here in the modern saeculum with the naturalists and supernaturalists, who are just as concerned about it as I am. So, I will be monitoring their work. And I wish them luck--or is it Godspeed?

---

[48]Ibid.